

Water Quality Standards

<http://www.state.ak.us/dec/water/wqsar/trireview/trireview.htm>

2007-2010 Triennial Review

Section Manager, Jim Powell
(907) 465-5185



TRIENNIAL REVIEW PROCESS

1. **Public notice triennial review start-up.** DEC asks for public comment on Water Quality Standard (WQS) topics that need review and priority of the topics. DEC also describes a review process and solicits stakeholders interested in potential advisory groups or other public participation in topic reviews.
2. **Select and Schedule Triennial Review Topics.** There will be many more topics suggested than can be realistically addressed in a three-year period, so the Department will prioritize and schedule topic reviews based in part on public input.
3. **Research and Review Topics.** For each priority topic, DEC will research available information and science, consider different options, and evaluate how implementation may affect water quality, water users, and regulated industries. DEC will review each topic separately, so that each topic can move at its own speed and one topic will not hold up other WQS changes that are ready for public notice or adoption. DEC will review a few topics at a time. A topic review may include one or more of the following:
 - DEC staff review,
 - public workshop,
 - independent contractor report,
 - technical workgroup of recognized experts,
 - stakeholder advisory group for topics with significant public interest, and/or
 - other stakeholder feedback (email list, fax, teleconference, survey).
4. **Prepare WQS revisions.** DEC will prepare regulation revisions if necessary to address issues from the topic review. Recommendations on a topic may also include changes to policy or implementation procedures.
5. **Public notice proposed WQS revisions.** There will be multiple WQS revision packages proposed during the Triennial Review. DEC will propose regulation revisions and public notice after completing the topic review. A single regulation package may also include revisions for multiple topics. State and federal law also requires DEC to hold a public hearing when revising the WQS.
6. **Amend and adopt new Water Quality Standards.** Adoption of WQS revisions must follow the requirements of the Administrative Procedures Act under AS 44.62. Following the public comment period, DEC will review comments and prepare a final draft of the regulations. The regulations are adopted by the Commissioner and the Lt. Governor and go into effect 30 days later. Adopted WQS are sent to the EPA for approval for use under the Clean Water Act for wastewater discharge permits and waterbody recovery plans for polluted waters.
7. **Begin next priority topic(s) review.** As each topic review is completed, DEC will begin work on new topics according to their priority.